

KIDS PLUS (FAMILY OR SMALL GROUP)

Jonah



THEME: Jonah

SCRIPTURE: Book of Jonah

VERSE: “This is love for God: to obey His commands. And His commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God has overcome the world.”
1 John 5:3, 4

CONCEPT: We show our love and commitment to God by obeying His Word and joyfully doing what He tells us. As long as we obey the Lord, things will work to our benefit, but if we disobey, we place ourselves outside His loving protection.

God told Jonah to go to a city called Nineveh to preach to the people there. But Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh. He did not like the people there. He knew how wicked they were. Besides, they were different. Why should God want to bother with them?

So Jonah tried to run away from God. Down at the seashore he found a ship all loaded and ready to sail in the opposite direction from Nineveh. Jonah paid his fare and went aboard.

The ship sailed away. But when it got out into the sea, a great storm arose. The wind blew. Lightning flashed. Big waves splashed over the sides of the ship. The ship rocked back and forth.

The sailors were frightened. They began to throw things out of the ship so it would not be so heavy. Some of them found Jonah, who was asleep.

“Wake up!” they shouted. “Do something! Ask your God to save us!”

Jonah looked at the frightened sailors. “I am the cause of the trouble,” he said. “I did not obey God. Throw me into the water and the storm will stop.”

The sailors did not want to throw Jonah out of the ship. But the storm grew worse. The wind blew harder and the waves tossed the ship so much that the men were sure they would never see dry land again. Finally they listened to Jonah and threw him overboard.

At once the wind stopped blowing. The sea quieted and the waves calmed down.

Jonah probably thought he was going to drown. But God had a big fish waiting for him. The fish opened its big mouth wide and swallowed Jonah!

Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights. As the fish swam in the deep waters, Jonah thought about what God had asked him to do. He was sorry he had not done what God told him to do. Jonah prayed and asked God to forgive him.

God made the fish cough Jonah out on the shore.

God said to Jonah again "I want you to go to Nineveh and preach to the people. Tell them they must obey me or I shall have to punish them and destroy their city."

This time Jonah obeyed God! The people prayed for forgiveness and their city was spared.

DISCUSSION:

1. What was Jonah's big mistake?
2. Does God ever ask us to do anything that we can't do?
3. What happened when Jonah disobeyed God? Did God still protect Him?
4. What happened when Jonah obeyed God? Do good things usually happen when we disobey God? What happens when we obey Him?
5. Why is it important to obey God the very first time He speaks to us?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

If you can get a box big enough to fit your family great. If not, have your family get under a table with the lights out. In either case, get your family in a cramped situation that is completely dark. Have the kids help tell the story of Jonah again and how he might have felt inside that fish. Discuss the importance of obeying God. What things has the Lord told your family to be doing? Are you obeying?

IT IS BEST TO OBEY GOD

Finish the picture. There are things missing. Draw a picture of Jonah. Where did you put him?

